



United States Department of the Interior
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Juneau Fish & Wildlife Field Office
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April 10, 2013

The Juneau Fish and Wildlife Field Office (Juneau Field Office) has prepared an environmental assessment (EA) regarding the management of invasive plants within the boundary of the City and Borough of Juneau (CBJ), "Integrated Pest Management of Invasive Plants in the City and Borough of Juneau." An EA is a concise public document that provides sufficient evidence and analysis for determining whether to prepare an environmental impact statement or a finding of no significant impact. The purposes of this EA are to:

- 1) Present and evaluate two alternative approaches for invasive plant management on lands within the CBJ;
- 2) Propose selection of the alternative that best meets Service policy and Juneau Field Office invasive plant management objectives while minimizing potential environmental impacts;
- 3) Provide an opportunity for public input on planning options; and
- 4) Determine whether the scope and magnitude of impacts expected from implementation of the preferred alternative warrant preparation of an environmental impact statement (EIS).

If significant impacts are expected, an EIS would be prepared. If not, the Juneau Field Office would implement the preferred alternative. In either case, the Service would disclose its final decision and supporting rationale in a separate decision document.

Invasive plants are plant species that are not native to an area and whose introduction causes or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health. Due to their aggressive nature, invasive plants have high potential for displacing native plants, disrupting ecosystem functions, and degrading fish and wildlife habitat. Eighty (80) species of non-native plants in more than 5,700 infestations have been documented in the CBJ. Many of these species threaten the integrity and productivity of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems important to fish, wildlife, humans, and the local economy.

In the EA we present two alternative approaches for future invasive plant management. The first alternative, the no-action alternative, would continue an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach that does not allow the use of herbicides. The second alternative, our proposed alternative, would adopt an IPM approach that allows for judicious use of herbicides in appropriate situations. IPM is a systematic planning, evaluation, and decision-making process used to guide and direct management of pests such as invasive plant species. Specifically, the IPM approach requires evaluation of pest biology, infestation characteristics, environmental factors, and reported effectiveness and environmental impact of various methods of pest management. These methods include cultural (e.g., sanitation practices, burning, mulching), manual (e.g., hand-pulling),

mechanical (e.g., mowing), and chemical (e.g., herbicides) techniques which, alone or combined, will minimize potential environmental impacts while also accomplishing management objectives.

We invite your review of the EA and your comments on the document. The EA can be downloaded at the following web address:

<http://alaska.fws.gov/fisheries/fieldoffice/juneau/restoration.htm>.

The comment period is open through May 10, 2013. Comments can be sent to John Hudson at the address provided above, at john_hudson@fws.gov, or faxed to (907) 586-7099. If you have questions or need additional information, please contact John Hudson at (907) 780-1169.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Bill Hanson", with a large, looping flourish extending from the end of the signature.

Bill Hanson
Field Office Supervisor